

FRENCH INDO-CHINA

A more Machiavellian counsellor, though to largely the same effect, was Hoang-Cao-Khai, former viceroy of Tonkin.¹ He advised his compatriots to learn all they could from the French. A premature attempt to break away was foredoomed to failure: Japan might be a more permanent and harsher master than France. Learn of the West and lie low for a hundred years, then Annam will be ready for autonomy. Like Phan Chau Trinh he blamed the fatuous stagnancy of old Annam for the conquest, nor had the upper classes learned anything by this failure. In 1876 the most brilliant reply to the question asked at the Hue examinations: "Was Japan right in turning to Western methods?" was in the negative, on the grounds that it meant an eventual return to barbarism.

It was China, Armani's perennial teacher, who gave the Annamites confidence in the West. Though Japan had been victor, the reforms which China instituted in 1900 influenced much more the Annamite intelligentsia. The writings of the Chinese reformers, Kang and Liang, stirred the Indo-Chinese to read European books, chiefly the eighteenth-century philosophers. They even took on Chinese names: Rousseau became Lu, and Montesquieu Manh. Revolutionary ideas buzzed in every Annamite head. France was reproached with having denied her heritage by keeping her proteges in ignorance. This was the first time that the Annamite intelligentsia admitted that the West had any grounds for superiority.

Japan, after her 1905 victory, became the champion of the Yellow Races and drew Aimamites to study there as well as in China. It was appropriate that Prince Coung De should have directed his conspiracy from Nippon. A change in the Annamite viewpoint was

evidenced at the opening of the new Hanoi University. Beau realized that if they had no facilities in the colony Annamite students would go abroad where foreign influences might be subversive. The closing of the University, as part of the reaction to the 1908 uprisings, disillusioned the native elite who were just beginning to have confidence in Western culture. Their disappointment was shown in the resolutions formulated by the Permanent Annamite Mission at Paris in 1908: more and better education was asked even before improvements in the colony's economy. It was unfortunate that at the very time the Annamites were eager to learn of the West France was beginning to retract and regret the generosity of the earlier period. *The Annamites* were still preoccupied with the *maMse* which contact with the West inspired in them. They

¹ Hoang-Cao-Kim, *Revue Incfa-Cktimse* (February 1910).